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Rededication of Albertson Hall & "To Our Teachers Who Toiling Fell"

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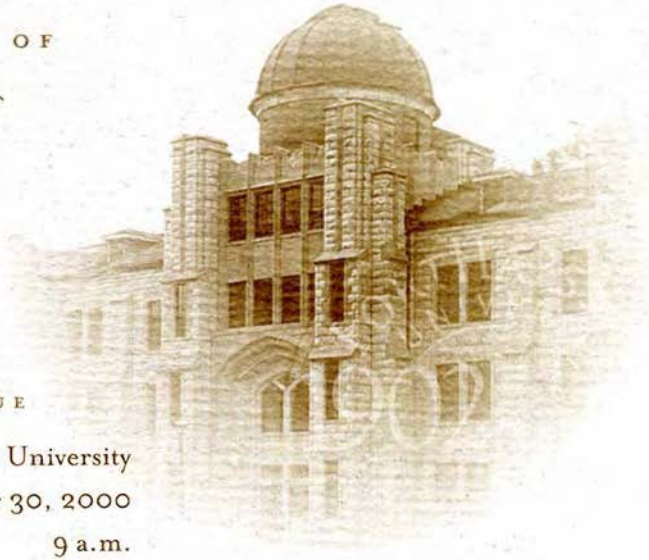
Rededication of

Albertson Hall & "To Our Teachers Who Toiling Fell" Plaque



Fort Hays State University

September 30, 2000

9 a.m.

Albertson Hall

The 1920s were a time of growth for the Fort Hays Kansas Normal School, now known as Fort Hays State University. New and strengthened programs drew higher student enrollments. Faculty qualifications were enhanced as instructors obtained advanced degrees in their fields. Construction on a total of six buildings was completed, including the Science Building in 1928.

Besides serving as the primary academic building for the sciences, this facility also temporarily housed other programs. During the early 1940s, War Training Service (WTS) pilot trainees practiced rifle maneuvers in the building's attic after a shooting range was created there by James Rouse, professor of agriculture and pistol shooting instructor. Previously, the space had been used by the Drama Department. Although the exact dates of occupancy are unclear, the fourth floor of the building housed the Nursing Department, established in 1952, as the program outgrew its original classroom facilities.

Not many structural changes to the Science Building, later renamed Albertson Hall, occurred until the 1962 addition of a new wing. The cost of this addition was $450,000. Although building projects slowed during the turbulent early 1970s, Albertson Hall saw an extensive renovation. By 1978, the building had new elevator and stair towers.

Prior to the opening of Tomanek Hall in 1995, the departments of agriculture, biological sciences, chemistry, physics and geosciences were located in Albertson Hall. The facility likely is most well known for the observatory, which has been open to the public for telescope viewing at specified times through the years.

Completion of a $7.8 million renovation of Albertson Hall occurred in May. Funding for the project was provided by state-allocated "Crumbling Classroom" monies. The building now houses the departments of agriculture, biological sciences and communication disorders, the physical therapy program and the dean of the College of Health and Life Sciences.

Program

Rededication of Albertson Hall & "To Our Teachers Who Toiling Fell" Plaque

Welcome
Kent Steward, Director
University Relations

Remarks
Dr. Edward H. Hammond, President
Fort Hays State University

The New Albertson Hall
Dr. Tony Fernandez, Dean
College of Health and Life Sciences

Rededication of Albertson Hall

History of "Toiling Fell" Plaque
Lois Lee Myerly
Retired FHSU Faculty Member

Rededication of Plaque

Closing
Kent Steward

The rededication ceremonies today are part of Fort Hays State University's five-year Centennial Celebration, which culminates in 2002.

Fred Albertson

The building we rededicate today was named in honor of Fred Albertson, professor of Agriculture. He began his career at FHSU, then the Fort Hays Normal School, in 1918. An innovator and leader, Professor Albertson helped students earn money for school as well as learn about community service through the expansion of the Normal Gardens project in 1922. The gardening program had been started by Professor E.B. Matthews several years earlier. Students were taught proper gardening techniques, which yielded successful crops that were sold along the Union Pacific Railroad from Denver to Kansas City. The surplus was used on campus, helping to lower the cost of food for students.

Also that year, Professor Albertson offered the first course in visual instruction. By contacting manufacturers, he obtained models for demonstrating to students how to incorporate visuals into their classes. He wrote articles on the subject, and his enthusiasm prompted many of his colleagues to begin utilizing visual aids. Professor Albertson can be called the "Father of Visual Education" on campus.

In the early 1930s, Fred Albertson decided to pursue a Ph.D. in Botany under internationally renowned plant ecologist Dr. J.E. Weaver at the University of Nebraska. The drought of the Great Plains provided him an excellent opportunity to study the grasslands under adverse conditions. He continued his research even after he returned to teach at Fort Hays in the mid 1930s. Students were included in experiments with drought resistant grasses during and after the Dust Bowl. The college farm and area farmers and ranchers benefited from Dr. Albertson's work.

Eventually named professor of Botany and chairman of the Graduate Division, Fred Albertson continued to be a pioneer in his field. During the 1950s, he took part in a two-year grasslands management and rehabilitation project in west India as a member of a team selected by the Kansas State Agricultural College to work with the United States Co-operation Mission. The Alumni Achievement Award was bestowed upon him in 1959 by Fort Hays in recognition of his many professional and personal accomplishments. Dr. Albertson passed away in 1961 while still on the faculty. His service is memorialized on the plaque, "To Our Teachers Who Toiling Fell," also rededicated during this ceremony today.

"Toiling Fell"

Little is known about the precise date of origin of the "Toiling Fell" plaque. In the December 13, 1933, issue of the *University Leader*, the campus newspaper, a story was published about the first two marble plaques that contained the names of faculty members who passed away while still in service.

The plaques initially were located in the old Forsyth Library, which is now McCartney Hall. During his tenure as president, William A. Lewis had hoped to erect a bell tower, or campanile, which many thought would be an appropriate location for the plaques. This never happened. Upon Lewis' death, alumni and friends attempted to carry out his wishes to build a bell tower, but the project failed due to lack of sufficient funding.

It is believed that the marble plaques were moved around 1967 from the old Forsyth Library building to the new one. Adding names was a challenge, as an entire plaque had to be removed from the wall in order to be engraved. Also, space for new names began to dwindle. In 1986, retired Fort Hays State University faculty member Dollie Thomas, now deceased, donated funds for the updating and maintenance of the plaques.

Another gift in 1993 by Dr. Ann McClure, associate professor of business administration at FHSU who also is now deceased, prompted the ordering of a new plaque which currently hangs in Forsyth Library. The plaque is constructed of rich walnut and contains the inscription "Non amittuntur, sed praemituntur," or "Not lost, but sent on ahead." Brass plates are engraved with the names of deceased faculty. This plaque serves as a permanent memorial for those who passed away while in service to the university.

The primary resource for the historical information contained in this program was a book titled *A History of FHSU, 1902-1977* by Dr. James Forsythe, retired vice provost and dean of the Graduate School. Also, special thanks to Dana Cunningham, director of Facilities Planning, for his assistance.

FORT HAYS STATE
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